

Ballard Roadside Raingardens: Project Update December 16, 2010

Hello Roadside Raingarden Neighbors,

We are switching our project updates from construction signs to e-mails. This message has been e-mailed to more than 30 Ballard neighbors who have shared their e-mail address with us. We will continue to provide regular updates over the next year.

Standing Water. There are ongoing concerns that some of the rain gardens aren't operating correctly and that the standing water isn't draining within 72 hours (3 days) after the rain stops, and is accumulating deeper than 6 inches. SPU staff will start monitoring each site and providing regular reports to the community summarizing how well the different gardens are draining.

Any raingardens that have standing water three days after a storm will be promptly pumped. Over the next three weeks, there might be a day or two delay in this schedule due to holidays and furloughs.

Monitoring. Staff will be visiting each site within two days after the most recent rain event to identify and flag sites that might not be draining properly. SPU staff is developing a tracking form that will be shared with the community via e-mail and the SPU website. If you would like to help us measure and record water depths, let us know. We would welcome your help.

Once the plants have a chance grow, the raingardens should drain better. If the raingardens continue to drain poorly after the plants are established, SPU will modify them.

Signage. In the next few weeks, SDOT will be removing the current sign posts with the black and yellow marker and No Parking signs that have a directional arrow and replacing them within a couple weeks with a new post that will be shorter. The new metal posts will be shorter and still retain the black and yellow marker. Approximately half of the No Parking signs will be removed. The remaining No Parking signs will be smaller and lower than the previous ones. We will be putting up temporary markers (probably orange traffic cones) at the bump outs to ensure an unsuspecting driver doesn't accidentally drive into one of them as happened earlier in construction.

Contractor. Paul Brothers, the contractor, is wrapping up work this week. The season is too cold and the soils are too wet to do any further raingarden work. Any remaining stockpiled material on 28th Ave NW should be removed within a few days. Paul Brothers will be back in the spring to finish up planting and any outstanding construction issues.

Asphalt Plugs. We will replace the sandbag inlets with a temporary asphalt plug. This will reduce the amount of water that can enter a raingarden which will give the plants a better chance to establish. Once the plants are firmly established, we'll remove the plugs. The raingardens will still get runoff from sidewalks and driveways.

Weather Forecast. The forecast for the week of Dec. 19 indicates showers every day. So we expect the raingardens to stay full.